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Dreamfused – Mischief and Magic review: Dreams really keep you alive

Boston's new gang continues the city's legacy of groundbreaking, genre-defining rock bands

★★★★★ (5/5)

By Harry Neville | 24th March 2020

Boston's own Dreamfused have been quietly brewing something special for years, but *Mischief and Magic* is the album that just might catapult them into the big leagues. It's a raucous, defiant, and deeply personal rock record—equal parts stadium-filling anthems, late-night introspection, and a sharp-eyed social pulse. But let's get one thing straight: despite what some might call a “breakout” moment, this isn't their debut. It's their second album, and it sounds like a band who've been waiting for the world to finally catch up.

The title track, *Mischief and Magic*, kicks things off with all the swagger you'd want from a band on the rise—sharp riffs, a pulsing rhythm section, and just the right amount of chaos to keep things interesting. *Forbidden Pulse* is an immediate highlight, already earning its reputation as the stadium anthem of 2020, with an electrifying chorus that practically begs for fists in the air.

But Dreamfused aren't just here to party. *Beyond* is a gut-punch of a song, written from the perspective of the dead speaking to their loved ones. It's hauntingly beautiful, and if you weren't already convinced of Ryan's vocal depth, his piano work here seals the deal. Meanwhile, *Standing*

Strong is the band's most direct connection to the working-class struggle, an unflinching tribute to those who keep the world running—a song that, in 2020, feels more relevant than ever.

There's no shortage of moments where the band flex their musical chops. Rising Sun Blues—a bold reimagining of the folk classic—features a jaw-dropping guitar solo from Alex that turns the familiar melody into something almost mythic. Then there's Livre de Vivre, which first appears as a stunning duet with rising star Olivia Sullivan. It's nothing short of enchanting, with Ryan's vocals blending seamlessly with Olivia's in a performance that's already begging for a live rendition. The second version, stripped back, offers a more introspective take, proving the song's strength in any form.

Not every track hits with the same intensity, but even the quieter moments shine. Paper Masks might not have the explosive energy of the anthems, but Sam's neat, elegant bass lines carry the song with effortless precision, giving it an understated groove. And if you want power? Outta Here is a full-throttle rush, driven by Maddie's thunderous drumming, which crashes through the track with relentless energy.

With Mischief and Magic, Dreamfused prove they're not just another rock band trying to ride a nostalgia wave—they're the real deal. It's an album that balances muscle with melody, anthems with intimacy, and above all, a hunger that makes it impossible to ignore. Whether this is their breakout moment or just another step toward world domination, one thing's for sure: Dreamfused have arrived.

Details



- **Release date:** March 17, 2020
- **Record label:** RCA Records